

BOOK REVIEW

ROXBURGH'S COMMON SKIN DISEASES.

Edited by Peter Borrie. 13th edition, 1967. pp. 485, 239 figs. H. K. Lewis, London. (50s.)

This well-known book, which has now reached its 13th edition, has been revised by Dr Borrie since its 11th edition to 1959. The present edition no longer has any colour plates and the "Index of Preliminary Diagnosis" has been omitted. However, the number of black-and-white illustrations has been increased and on the whole these are of a reasonable standard. A new chapter has been added on dermatoses associated with systemic disease and several fresh sections have been included.

The chapter on syphilis by Dr C. S. Nicol gives a

lucid and well-illustrated description of the skin lesions of syphilis. This is a fairly comprehensive chapter and it seems anomalous that, although the importance of observation after treatment is stressed, the treatment itself is not described. There is a good account of scabies but there is no mention in the book of the dermatosis of Reiter's disease. As this so closely resembles psoriasis it probably warrants inclusion in spite of its comparative rarity.

There is no doubt that this edition will retain its popularity with students and general practitioners as a clear and practical guide to the diagnosis and treatment of skin diseases. However, with several cheaper textbooks now available, some students may find it too expensive.

P. Rodin

OBITUARY

RALPH BAKER, 1905-1967

Ralph Baker, consultant venereologist on the staff of the Endell Street Clinic of St. Peter's, St. Paul's, and St. Philip's Hospitals and consultant venereologist in charge of male patients at the Marlborough Clinic of the Royal Free Hospital, died on August 22, 1967, soon after his 62nd birthday.

"Mick" Baker was born in Leeds on July 26, 1905, and received his medical education at Leeds University, qualifying with the Conjoint Diploma in 1931. Shortly afterwards he moved to London and set up in general practice in Bloomsbury. It was here that he first became interested in venereology and combined this specialty with his general practice until the outbreak of the second world war.

He joined the Army on September 3, 1939, and was first posted to the Military Hospital at Shorncliffe with duties in Dermatology and Venereology. A member of the medical staff at that time remembers him as a most amiable colleague equally liked by patients, orderlies, and nursing and medical staff. He is particularly remembered for his efficient work at the time of Dunkirk. Baker organized the admission of casualties to Shorncliffe; taking responsibility for initiating early treatment and sending cases

requiring surgery to the operating theatres with maximum speed. There followed a period in full-time venereology at the Royal Herbert Hospital, Netley, before being posted as a major, specialist venereologist, to the Middle East where he spent the remainder of the war.

On demobilization at the end of the war, he accepted a post with U.N.R.R.A. and for the next 2 years practised venereology and trained Chinese doctors in the specialty in the hospital at Tsingtao.

On his return to England in 1947, he took up a part-time appointment at the Endell Street V.D. Clinic of St. Paul's Hospital—at that time run by the London County Council. In the following year, with the formation of the National Health Service, the clinic became the V.D. Department of St. Peter's and St. Paul's Hospitals under the joint direction of Dr A. H. Harkness and Dr W. N. Mascal.

Besides his main appointment at St. Paul's and private practice at Portland Place, he was appointed venereologist in charge of male patients at the Marlborough Clinic of the Royal Free Hospital in June, 1951.

Mick Baker enjoyed foreign travel and usually spent his annual leave abroad. He took the opportunity